

# The Liszt Society Newsletter

No. 26 - WINTER 1986: Edited by ADRIAN WILLIAMS  
5

## LISZT CONCERTS, LONDON 1986.

The following list contains those which have come to our attention thus far - but is in no way intended to be complete and comprehensive.

- FEBRUARY:** Sunday the 2nd. Recital by Daniel Barenboim at the Royal Festival Hall. Première Année de Pèlerinage: Suisse (plus Beethoven's Hammerklavier Sonata) Begins at 3.15 pm.
- MARCH:** Saturday the 8th. The Dante Symphony and Gran Mass at Goldsmith's College.
- Saturday the 15th. "Liszt the Poet" - a recital by Earl Wild at the Wigmore Hall.
- Tuesday the 18th. Psalm 13 at the Royal Academy of Music. 7.30 pm.
- Wednesday the 19th. "Liszt the Transcriber" - a recital by Earl Wild at the Wigmore Hall.
- Saturday the 22nd. "Liszt the Virtuoso" - a recital by Earl Wild at the Wigmore Hall.
- Saturday the 22nd. Recital by Alfred Brendel at the Royal Festival Hall. Années de Pèlerinage: Suisse + Italie.
- Tuesday the 25th. London Philharmonic Orchestra at the Royal Festival Hall. Piano Concerto in A - soloist Jon Kimura Parker (plus Kodály's Hány János Suite and Bartók's Concerto for Orchestra.)
- Wednesday the 26th. Recital by John Bingham at the Queen Elisabeth Hall. Bach-Liszt: Prelude and Fugue in A minor. Liszt: Sonata in B minor (plus Beethoven's 33 Variations on a Theme of Diabelli).
- JULY:** Sunday the 6th. Philharmonia Orchestra at the Royal Festival Hall. Faust Symphony.
- OCTOBER/  
NOVEMBER:** The Scottish National Orchestra will include the Dante Symphony in their programmes in Edinburgh and Glasgow.
- AUTUMN:** At the Wigmore Hall, Leslie Howard will be giving three recitals devoted to music by Liszt. Exact dates will be notified in a later Newsletter.

## FACSIMILE EDITION.

To commemorate the Liszt Centenary, the music publishers Boosey & Hawkes are offering a facsimile edition of the only surviving manuscript of the 19th Hungarian Rhapsody. The edition "shows a typical example of the handwriting of the elderly Liszt and provides an opportunity of becoming acquainted with the composer's working method and compositional habits".

A limited number of copies in two versions is available: a "personalised", de luxe edition in velour binding with an embossed cameo of Liszt on the cover, and a cloth-bound edition with Liszt's portrait.

Further details from Helen Forbes, Boosey & Hawkes, The Hyde, Edgware Road, London NW9 6JN. Tel: 01-205 3861.

CHRISTUS AT THE  
BERLIOZ FESTIVAL.Ronald Crichton writes:

The proud and prosperous city of Lyons shares the Berlioz Festival with the composer's birthplace, the little Dauphinois town of La Côte Saint-André, just under an hour's drive to the east towards the Alps. The festival is international in conception and in appeal. It does not, however, attract glossy audiences of the Bayreuth and Salzburg type - rather, locals with a good contingent of enthusiasts from all over the place. The atmosphere is pleasantly informal.

Up to now the festival has been an annual event. Wagner apart, you cannot for ever run a large-scale festival on the works of a single composer - Salzburg long ago expanded beyond Mozart. The fact has been acknowledged at Lyons-La Côte by the gradual inclusion of music by contemporaries of Berlioz or by composers associated with him by style (Alkan and Liszt) or subject-matter (Elgar's Shakespearean Falstaff). Last year it was announced that the Berlioz Festival will henceforward be biennial and that the programmes will more consistently explore the sphere of Berlioz's influence. Last year brought the Cherubini C minor Requiem, Gounod's St. Cecilia Mass and Liszt's Christus.

Each major work is repeated in both cities, the main venues being the large, comfortable, garish Auditorium Maurice Ravel at Lyons and at La Côte the splendid medieval corn exchange, an open, ancient-timbered market neither comfortable nor garish. I heard Christus at Lyons. The auditorium was by no means full, yet I doubt if without stars of major magnitude there would have been a larger audience in the Festival Hall in London. For all its length, Christus is a sober, unspectacular work written for modest forces, unconcerned with the appeal (possessed by, say, the Berlioz Requiem or Mahler's Eighth Symphony) of vast numbers. Neither the virtuoso nor the Mephistophelean Liszt are in evidence. They would have been out of place. Instead he displays other sides of his Protean character - the enthusiast for Gregorian chant and would-be reformer of church music, the landscape painter, the fireside dreamer of the Christmas Tree, now and then the introspective, fearless harmonic explorer of the final years.

The small audience remained uncommonly quiet and attentive through a fine performance by the Rotterdam Philharmonic Orchestra and the Slovak Philharmonic Choir conducted with <sup>un-</sup>showy but effective command by James Conlon. Liszt surely had a church acoustic in mind for Christus, expecting long echoes like Bruckner (though using as a rule much simpler textures) - as we know, Bruckner played the organ at the first Viennese performance. The Lyons auditorium did not provide enough resonance. The sound was smooth and beautiful but remote, with little sense of contact or "crunch".

It was a sad error to omit the first of the two Stabat Maters (Liszt used "speciosa" as well as the more familiar "dolorosa"), which ensures the necessary contrast of choral tone between the two long instrumental Christmas pastorals, atmospherically scored but deliberately undramatic. Why not divide up Christus? The first part, subtitled "Christmas oratorio" would stand on its own. So, surely, would the second Stabat Mater.

The soloists included Tom Krause, whose account of the passionate, Tristanesque "Tristis est anima mea" (one suspects Liszt was aware of a possible pun) with evident feeling, but the effect in this hall was subdued. One recalled the unforgettable performance by the Jamaican bass Willard White in the Westminster Cathedral Christus which crowned the London Liszt Festival of 1977. Though the baritone has the best of the solo music, it was the Yugoslav mezzo Mariana Lipovsek who made the deepest impression, both for intensity and beauty of tone. Soprano and tenor were Benita Valente and Peter Lindroos.

Extraordinary work - described by Liszt as his "musical Will and Testament", resembling an artist's sketchbook or diary executed not sketchily but with the care and precision of an illuminated Book of Hours. We are unlikely to hear it often, yet we neglect it to our shame and to our loss.

LISZT  
SYMPOSIUM  
AT  
BUDAPEST.

We are delighted to learn that the American Liszt Society have bestowed their Award for Excellence upon Maria P. Eckhardt of Budapest, in recognition of her outstanding services to Lisztian scholarship. Maria is a good and excellent friend of several of us here in London, and we offer her our warmest congratulations on this most merited distinction.

Among the tasks facing Maria this year is organisation of the International Liszt Symposium being held at Budapest this autumn - in the week beginning Sunday, 19 October. For those who would like to attend the Symposium, she writes as follows:

A number of distinguished Liszt scholars and writers have already agreed to take part in the Symposium. It is our hope that, in addition to obtaining an insight into the results of recent Liszt research, participants will also have enjoyable musical and sight-seeing experiences.

Accommodation and meals are at the participant's own expense. If you wish, we can make an hotel reservation for you from 19 to 23 October (four nights). Very good accommodation is available at the Hotel Taverna, a new, three-star hotel in central Budapest. The seat of the Symposium, as well as the venues chosen for the other events, can easily be reached from this hotel.

If you would like to attend the Symposium, please inform our Secretariat (H-1250 Budapest, Pf. 28) as soon as possible, so that we can send you a registration form and further information. Your registration will be valid only after you have returned the form duly completed. However, we should be grateful to hear from you immediately, if you wish to take part in the study tour and if you need an hotel reservation.

Planned Programme of the Symposium:

Sunday, 19 October. Arrival at Budapest. 16.30 - 18.00 registration at the Old Music Academy (V1. Vörösmarty u. 35.)

18.00: opening ceremony and concert in the Hall of the Old Music Academy, adjoining Liszt's former flat. Presentation of the reconstructed flat; i.e. the new Liszt Museum.

Monday, 20 October. First Conference Day. Seat of the conference is the Kodály Hall of the Institute for Musicology of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, 1. Táncsics u. 7. The papers last approximately 20 to 25 minutes, followed by discussions of about 10 minutes.

9.00 to 12.25: 5 papers plus coffee break.

14.00 to 15.30: Sightseeing by bus - In the Footsteps of Liszt.

15.45 to 19.00: 5 papers plus tea break.

Tuesday, 21 October. Second Conference Day.

Papers at the same times as yesterday.

12.30 to 13.10: Liszt Rarities - a short concert in the Kodály Hall.

19.15 to 20.00: A short guided tour of the exhibitions at the Institute for M'ology.

20.00: Reception given by the Institute for Musicology for Symposium participants.

Wednesday, 22 October. Third Conference Day.

9.00 to 12.25: 5 papers plus coffee break.

13.00: Inauguration of Liszt's statue by László Marton at the Congress Centre.

Afternoon: free.

19.30: Festival Concert in celebration of the 175th anniversary of the birth of Liszt. Held at the Liszt Academy of Music, it will include the Faust Symphony and the Piano Concerto in E flat. Antal Doráti will conduct the Hungarian State Orchestra, and the pianist will be Zoltán Kocsis.

Thursday, 23 October.

Study Tour, First Day.

9.00: Coaches leave the Hotel Taverna for Esztergom (Gran) via Szentendre/Visegrád.

11.00: Arrival at Esztergom; visit to the cathedral.

12.00 to 12.30: Organ recital in the cathedral.

12.30 to 13.30: Lunch.

13.30 to 15.00: Free programme in Esztergom.

15.00 to 15.45: En route to Tata. 15.45 to 16.30: Coffee at Lake Tata.

16.30 to 17.30: En route to Zirc.

17.30 to 18.30: Zirc - visit to the Abbey Church and the Historical Library.

19.00: Arrival at Veszprém; dinner and accommodation.

Friday, 24 October.

Study Tour, Second Day.

9.30 to 12.00: Round-table discussion at the seat of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences in Veszprém. Topic: current problems and the most important problems facing Liszt research (complete editions, thematic catalogue, possibilities of international co-operation).

12.30 to 13.30: Lunch. 13.30 to 15.00: Guided walk in historical Veszprém.

19.00 to 20.00: Concert of choral music by Liszt, given by the Veszprém and Budapest Liszt Chamber Choirs.

20.30: Reception given by the Veszprém Town Council. Close of the Symposium.

Saturday, 25 October.

8.00 to 10.30: Return from Veszprém to Budapest by coach.

NEWS FROM  
HUNGARY.

The latest edition of "Hungarian Music News" (Vol. 11, No. 3) contains some interesting pages on the New Liszt Edition published by Editio Musica.

The writer is one of the present editors of the edition, Imre Sulyok.

In December 1985, Volume 1/13 (Dances, Marches and Scherzos 1) and Volume 1/18 (Etudes en douze exercices, Op. 6, various Ungarische Nationalmelodien, plus all the six versions for piano of the Rákóczi March and Buch der Lieder 2) were published.

Hungaroton, Hungary's leading record-publishing-house, announce that inter alia they will be issuing a recording of Liszt's youthful opera Don Sanche ou le château d'amour. The conductor will be Tamás Pál, and the leading rôles will be sung by Júlia Hamari. Guy de Mey and István Gáti.

A 2-day Austro-Hungarian Liszt Symposium will be held in Budapest at the end of January, organised by the Austrian Cultural Institute and Embassy in Budapest under the leadership of Professor Walter Pass. Each country will contribute six lecturers.

BOOKS.

Paul Merrick's Revolution and Religion in the Music of Liszt will be published this year by C. U. P.

Franz Liszt: the Man and Musician by Ronald Taylor will also be available shortly. As will Harold Taylor's Kentner at Eighty (Kahn & Averill), a "celebratory symposium" Nancy Reich's Clara Schumann: The Artist and the Woman (Gollancz, £15.95) offers some pages on that pianist's relations with Liszt.

On Frau Schumann, incidentally, a certain contemporary opinion is not without interest: "Je lui ai vouée une profonde admiration; mais mon culte est un peu froid, je lui ai trouvé un rythme superbe, un mécanisme fort beau, mais elle a de la sécheresse, elle ne dépasse jamais les bornes, et son imagination me paraît pauvre." Thus the 18-year-old Cosima Liszt.